

of the appropriation bills in the next 2 weeks.

The fiscal year ends, of course, September 30. If we have not passed those appropriation bills, we will have to make an accommodation to keep the government running. We usually do that in the form of a continuing resolution, a CR, as we call it, which simply provides for the continuation of funding of government at present levels until such time as we can complete the appropriation process.

We are hopeful that we will complete the appropriation process in the near term. I won't define the near term, but we are hopeful that it will be nearer rather than further apart; but we are looking at all the alternatives that will be necessary to keep government operating as the American public expect and as we expect it.

Mr. BLUNT. On the appropriation bills, again, as I reminded the majority leader earlier today, the Republicans voting for the appropriations bills, most of them had a number of Republicans that would sustain a Presidential veto if that turns out to be the result. I would anticipate that we need to be thinking about how we move this as quickly as possible.

In that regard, the Senate has already produced a fall calendar for their Members. Our Members would benefit as early as possible to having a sense to where, if we are not going to be here in the fall, I think the Senate intends not to be here the week of Columbus Day and maybe the week of Thanksgiving and maybe the week after that. I wonder if the leader can give us any sense of when to expect a fall calendar or your views on that at this point as Members make their plans for the fall.

It appears the Senate, by the way, it appears our friends on the other side are scheduling as if they intend to be here for quite some time.

Mr. HOYER. The Members already have a fall schedule. It's the Senate that wants a winter schedule, and I am somewhat concerned about that.

As you know, initially Mr. BOEHNER, my predecessor as the majority leader, had projected October 3 or thereabouts, 4th or 5th. When I became the majority leader, it was my responsibility to address the schedule.

I thought we would need at least another 3 weeks, so I added on to, I believe, the 26th of October, which is a Friday.

Since that time, of course, the leader of the Senate has announced the schedule that you just observed, with a week off at Columbus Day. We do not have that, of course. We have Columbus Day, returning Tuesday at 6:30. That has not been modified at this point in time and, frankly, I don't expect to modify it.

It doesn't mean it won't be, but I have no plans to modify that expectation at this point in time. Frankly, I would like to see us do as much work as we possibly can by the October 26 date that we have projected as our

date. We will see where the Senate is at that point in time.

But in answer to your question about the fall schedule, sometime in the next 2 weeks, probably not this coming week, because we are not going to be here most of the time, but the following week, in discussions with the Senate, we intend to have some discussions with the Senate leadership with Mr. REID, the majority leader, next week, to determine more precisely what he anticipates being able to do, and, therefore, what our responsibilities will be to be here to respond to what the Senate does.

As I say, we put all the appropriations bills on their plate, if you will. We need to pass those, or, in some form, pass funding for the various agencies.

So the answer to your question, Mr. Whip, is that we expect to have some more precise formulation for the fall and hopefully not winter schedule by the, not next week, but the following week.

We are aware of the fact, and I used to hear from everybody, now I am hearing from everybody on both sides of the aisle, they understandably want some certainty in the scheduling so they can schedule their work in their districts.

I understand that. We are going to try to accommodate that.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for his response. Time in the district is important to the Members. It's better used, of course, if they can have some anticipation of that time.

My only suggestion would be that at this point in the year we normally don't know when we are going to finish, but it might be possible to come up with some blocks of time that even if we are working, we would know that we would not anticipate being here during those blocks of time. That would be helpful.

Mr. HOYER. I want to thank my friend for joining in discussions on that issue before we came to the floor today. I think the gentleman is correct. I think Members would find that useful. If we can accommodate that, I would like to do that.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank you for that information. I know we all look forward to the report early next week from Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. Even though, because of the focus on that schedule being here one day, I think it's an important day for Members to be here, and appreciate the fact that we have scheduled it in that way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Monday next for morning hour debate; that when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn

to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 11; that when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Friday, September 14; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday, September 17, for morning-hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday, September 19, 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

□ 1600

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, the new military strategy in Iraq is simply not working. President Bush misled Congress and the American people when he led our troops into Iraq. To this day, he continues trying to mislead us, most recently with reports that violence is down in Iraq since the surge of the United States troops. This is absolutely untrue, and I am utterly shocked at the audacity of this administration and many of my Republican colleagues to so boldly manipulate the facts to serve their own political agenda.

Overall, violence in Iraq has risen since the troop surge. That's right, violence has risen.

Newly released statistics for Iraqi civilian deaths in August show a 20 percent increase since July. The President and the Pentagon are picking and choosing which numbers will be included in death tolls to give the appearance that the violence is down.

According to information from the Iraq Study Group and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, they do not count deaths of people who have been shot in the head from the front. They do not count deaths of Shiite or Shiite violence which is on the rise in the oil-rich south, nor do they count the intra-Sunni violence in the Sunni Triangle.

Mr. Speaker, it is reported they are not even counting deaths from car bombs. We read about deadly car bombs in Iraq nearly every day, and these deaths are not being counted by this administration.

I'm also greatly concerned about the Defense Department adjusting its figures for sectarian killings in the 5-month period before the surge began. There's a major discrepancy between the data on the March 2007 report and the June 2007 report for this period. The original number of approximately 5,500 deaths was increased to 7,400, offering the appearance of significantly decreased violence since the troop surge began.

I must ask, why is this administration working so hard to create the appearance of success in Iraq? Is it to justify the more than \$368 billion we have spent since the inception of Operation Iraqi Freedom? Is it to rationalize the staggering \$10 billion a month we continue to spend in Iraq while we put the lives of our brave soldiers at risk?

During every month of 2007 there have been more U.S. military fatalities than in the same month of 2006. How can anyone possibly say that this new surge is working?

Mr. Speaker, I was hopeful that the administration had perhaps begun listening to the cries of the American people to bring our troops home when reports over the last couple of weeks indicated that General Petraeus was considering a draw down of our current troop levels.

Unfortunately, we learned today that our hopes of redeployment of our military servicemembers will continue to fall on deaf ears, as General Petraeus announced earlier today that he has no intention of scaling back our troop levels in Iraq. In failing to do so, this Nation's attention will remain distracted from adequately protecting the home front, building an adequate health care system, reforming Social Security and decreasing the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush loves to talk about the success of the al Anbar province where he made a surprise visit for a photo opportunity on Labor Day. But there are many conflicting opinions about why violence has decreased, whether or not this is the result of the troop surge, and whether the success in this region is indicative of success in other more complex regions of the country.

Many believe this success may be the result of multilayered issues. It may be an indication that ethnic cleansing has been completed in many neighborhoods and that there are just not as many people left to kill. It may be the result of militants moving to other regions of the country where violence has increased. It may be the result of Sunnis befriending the United States simply as a means to accomplish a larger goal of stepping back into power. It may be the result of Sunnis finally rejecting the routine abuse by al Qaeda. It may be a combination of all of these.

Regardless, we cannot ensure that any success in al Anbar is a result of the troop surge, nor can we ensure that this success can be transferred to other parts of the country. In fact, the overriding component of ensuring success in Iraq is political reconciliation, as pointed out by the GAO and the Jones Commission before the House Armed Services Committee this week.

Military and security progress cannot be made without political reconciliation, which will open the door to resolving the underlying issues that have caused sectarian violence in Iraq.

President Bush has yet to discuss the failing grade given by the GAO to Iraq on political reconciliation.

Mr. Speaker, ignoring reports and underreporting violence is not the answer. This administration has misled the American people for far too long. Enough is enough.

IN GOD WE TRUST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KAGEN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues can understand me. I've got a little bit of laryngitis.

Mr. Speaker, directly across from me, at the top of the Chamber is a depiction of Moses, and behind me, above the Speaker's rostrum is words, "In God We Trust."

There are a lot of people in this country who have tried to get all symbols of religion, belief in God taken off of all public properties and coins and currency. Recently, there were thousands of coins minted without "In God We Trust" on them, and now they're talking about putting "In God We Trust" in an obscure place on coins so that people can't read it, right on the edge of the coin. I think this is—we're moving in a very, very wrong direction.

This country was formed with a firm reliance on God Almighty, and when we start taking God out of everything, as some people want to do, we run the risk of having him turn his back on us. This Nation was formed and was founded with people praying every day in the Second Continental Congress when we had the Declaration of Independence and in Constitution Hall because they couldn't come to an agreement, and by prayer and supplication they were able to reach agreement; thus, we have the Declaration of Independence, and we had our Constitution that has made this country so wonderfully powerful and respected around the world for the past 250 years.

Those who try to take God off of all things governmental, such as coinage or currency or in this Chamber, are making a terrible mistake, in my opinion. And I'm going to be introducing legislation that will demand or mandate that "In God We Trust" be maintained and retained on our currency

and on our coinage in a prominent place.

Once you start turning your back on the good Lord, I think you are going to reap the whirlwind, and this is something this Nation cannot afford to do right now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FAA AIRSPACE REDESIGN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Aviation Administration has come up with a proposal to redesign the airspace around New York, New Jersey and the Pennsylvania area. Despite all the opposition and all the concerns of the people affected, lo and behold, the FAA made no significant changes in their final proposal. Full steam ahead, business as usual, the public be damned.

So I stand today in strong opposition to the FAA proposal to redesign the airspace around New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia. Specifically, I am disturbed by their actions surrounding the proposal to route up to 600 airplanes a day over Rockland and West Chester Counties in New York, which I represent.

The FAA created that proposal with zero input from the people whose lives would be most harmed by this proposal. In fact, even when I brought this up to the FAA in a meeting in my office, it took over a week of urging before they would even agree to attend a public forum that I held in Rockland.

They also conducted this entire process over the course of several years without any kind of adequate notification. My constituents expected better and they deserved better.

Throughout this process, we have seen, time and time again, that the FAA would ignore the opinions and suggestions of myself and anyone else who would be affected by their proposal. Valid suggestions that would improve this proposal were written off without serious consideration.

The FAA is trying to push through a proposal that doesn't make sense, and they are refusing to accept any changes.

But the plan itself is not my only problem. The misleading tactics and the stonewalling by the FAA only add to this issue. Every effort I and my constituents and some of my colleagues have made has been met with bureaucratic resistance while, at the same time, the FAA has laid down strict deadlines for comments and changes.